CLOSING THE SALE

Mary J. Reed

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CLOSING THE SALE

A Few Suggestions that may Help Men who Sell Things to Cut Down the Percentage of "Almost" Orders

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BY J. C. ASPLEY

Editor, "Sales Management Magazine"; Author, "How to Sell Quality"; "Field Tactics for Salesmen"; "What a Salesman should know about Advertising" etc.

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IN presenting this manual—the sixth of a series—to the Dartnell clientele we have three objects in mind:

First we want to help salesmen to grow. We feel that the ability on the part of a salesman to get an actual order instead of a promise is the determining factor in his success. By gathering plans which have been succesfully used by hundreds of salesmen in all lines of business, and boiling them down into a compact reference book, any open-minded salesman should be able to secure many plans which he can profitably apply in his own work.

The second purpose we have in mind is to contribute something practical to a subject suffering from an over-dose of theory. Because closing the sale is of such importance, innumerable writers have propounded equally numerous theories for doing it. As a result we find many salesmen, especially younger men, holding weird and fanciful ideas about an intensely practical operation. These misconceptions have the effect of magnifying in the salesman's mind the difficulties of closing, with the result that he approaches that stage in fear and trembling. Such anxiety is little short of disastrous.

Our third and main object is to do our bit toward cutting down the waste that is threaten-

ing our present system of distribution. Much of this waste can be placed at the door of inefficient salesmanship, and the most glaring example of that is the high percentage of "almost closed" orders which salesmen report. Three and four calls are required to do that which should and can be done in one call. Hours are spent in selling an order which should be closed in a few minutes. *There is scarcely one sales force in the country today that is not paying too high a price for orders.*

If our present system of distribution is to survive the crisis through which it will pass in the next decade these unbearable costs must be brought down or other means of marketing will be found. The growth of chain stores, mail order houses and more recently co-operative distributing agencies are some indication of what we may expect in this connection. *The only answer to this challenge is more orders for less money, more sales from fewer calls.*

It is the realization that something practical must be done to bring sales costs down that has prompted the sales executives and salesmen who collaborated in the preparation of this book to pool their experiences.

List of Collaborators

The suggestions contained in this book represent the combined experience of nearly 400 sales executives, including:

A. MacLachlan, Secretary, Square D Company.
E. J. Little, Sales Manager, Wahl Company.
John M. Brock, President, Dewar Manufacturing Co.
F. W. Aust, Sales Manager, Queen City Candy Company.
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A. V. Smith, Sales Manager, Streator Brick Co.
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H. L. Simpson, Sales Manager, United Drug Company.
Joseph B. Kowalewski, Secretary, Best Manufacturing Co.
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J. F. Hassett, Manager, United States Rubber Company.
Charles A. Dostal, Manager, Westinghouse Lamp Co.
Fred Larkins, American Wholesale Lumber Association.
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G. H. Young, Sales Manager, Marshall-Wells Company.
J. J. McPhillips, Seamans & Cobb Co.

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"The World admires the man who can finish his work—because this man renders the world a service.

"In the final analysis, in art or science, it is the ability to finish well a thing begun that makes the true genius.

"It is this quality that distinguishes Whistler from the average artist and Burbank from the average florist."

Louis F. Paret

I—The Importance of Being a Good Closer

Two men were sitting in the lounge room of the Lawyer's Club in New York.

One of the men was L. A. Cerf, metropolitan manager for the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company. The other's name was Hall, a salesman.

The salesman was evidently trying to sell Mr. Cerf insurance. Even an untrained observer could not help but notice that Hall was going after his order intelligently. His approach was good. He developed the interview cleverly, and held the attention of the older man with great skill. At the conclusion of his presentation he paused to give Mr. Cerf an opportunity to buy.

"I am deeply interested in your proposition, Mr. Hall," he finally said, "for I had no idea that life insurance would enable me to accomplish so many things near to my heart. I'm going to give very careful consideration to what you have told me and then I will be ready to act. I think you have given me all the data I need. Won't you call at my office at 10:30 Tuesday morning?"

Salesman Hall smiled. Mr. Cerf, his manager, had invited him to lunch, and asked him to sell

him some insurance so that he could help him strengthen his sales talk. He put forth his very best effort. Yes, he felt sure that he had done well, and now Mr. Cerf's admission that he was as good as sold confirmed it. On the whole, he was pleased with himself.

But his self-satisfaction was to be short lived. The smile left the manager's face. He spoke seriously: "Sit down, Hall, I see now what your trouble is." Hall, nonplussed, did so.

"How many times during the past week," continued Mr. Cerf, "have interviews developed just the same way that this interview developed. Nine times out of ten, I dare say. Yet you haven't closed any of these men. You didn't write any business all last week—not a single policy. Why? I'll tell you. Because with them just as with me you had the case closed on the first interview *but you let the man put you off.*

Closing Six Sales in Ten on First Calls

"Instead of staying with your man and getting an order, you let the man stall you with this dodge about coming back next Tuesday. And you went back Tuesday only to find your man cold and your good work undone. You had to go through the whole procedure a second time with very much less effect than the first time, because the second

time you were telling an old story. The cards were stacked against you.

"Make up your mind, Hall, to close every man you can on the first call. Unless you are getting 63 per cent of your business on the first interview your salesmanship is weak. Never go back more than twice, except in very rare cases. If you will follow that advice you will some day become a big money maker, because you have all the other essential qualifications. The only thing you lack is *closing* ability."

What a Reputation for Closing Will Do

This conversation took place some time back. It proved to be the turning point in the career of a man who is now regarded as one of the most successful general agents in the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company, which position Mr. Hall won because of the reputation he had made in New York as a "sure-fire" closer.

There are hundreds upon hundreds of other "Halls" in sales work today—intelligent, conscientious, hard working salesmen making a bare living, but who are capable of doing big things, if they only had closing ability. But they haven't that knack. They have the same idea about their work as Mr. Hall had about his, before his talk

with Mr. Cerf. They think because they can talk well and persuasively that their methods are above improvement. They think that this idea of first call selling may be all right in the insurance business, or in the bond business, but with them it is necessary to first get in "solid" with buyers.

So these men go along year after year, satisfied to be average men, forever talking about the sales they "almost" closed and the orders they "hope" to get. They don't seem to understand that every time they call back it adds just that much to the cost of selling. They don't grasp the fact that a promise is a long, long way from being an order.

Orders "Almost" Closed Is Rent "Almost" Paid

It doesn't make any difference what line of business you are in, whether you are selling safety pins or life insurance, or Limberger cheese, there is one thing your house must have—and that thing is *closed* orders. It takes orders to keep the smokestacks smoking. It takes orders to buy raw materials. It takes orders to put the money in the pay envelopes every week. It takes orders, and lots of them, to pay the taxes which Uncle Sam requires every business to pay. It takes orders to pay the bankers their interest and the stockholders their dividends. It takes orders to

pay the salaries of the officers of the company and the hundred and other expenses which *must* be met every day if a business is to be kept going. These expenses cannot be met with promises.

Even in selling such matter-of-fact products as grocery specialties, where the salesmen call on the smallest store keepers, closing ability wins quick recognition. "Two of our best district managers," writes an official of The Hills Brothers Company, packers of Dromedary food products, "are F. W. Wilson and Edward Jones. Both of these men were promoted because of their ability to close the business without having to make call-backs. While our product is sold only in small case lots, it calls for fully as much skill in closing as selling the more costly specialties, and we have found that sales tactics successfully used in the sale of one can invariably be adapted with equal success to the sale of the other." These men, like hundreds of others in the big money making class, compelled recognition through sheer ability to get the order signed.

An Order Today Is Worth Two Tomorrow

Keep in mind that deferred orders are your competitor's greatest opportunity. Are you going to be so foolish as to let him come along, after you have done all the hard cultivating, and pick the

bloom? A few months ago a salesman for Holcomb and Hoke, makers of the Butterkist Popcorn machine, called upon a Cincinnati confectioner by the name of Samuel Smith. While the salesman was talking, a man walked into the store and sat down. The candy store man, for some reason, which the salesman at the time couldn't understand, appeared to be sold on putting in a machine, but balked at signing the order. He made one excuse after another. But the Butterkist salesman was trained to get the business without call backs. He met stalls with facts. After two hours, he finally got Mr. Smith to sign.

Why Promises Are Not Orders

As the salesman was leaving the store the man, who had been waiting, rose to go. "I might as well be on my way," he said, "I stopped in to get the order that Mr. Smith promised me last week, but I see you have beaten me to it." He represented another popcorn machine company located in Cincinnati. Had he appreciated the importance of getting the order on the first call, Sam Smith would be using his machine today instead of a Butterkist. It was a good example of where weak closing tactics cost a salesman the order after he had made the sale!

An order isn't an order until you have the cus-

tomer's signature on the traditional dotted line, and all the various legal requirements which surround the making of a contract have been complied with. The salesman, up to the time this has been done, is a liability to his company. After he closes the sale he becomes an asset. As an asset he grows in direct proportion to the number of sales he closes.

"Making sales," says A. MacLachlan, a sales manager who admits being a "bug" on the subject of properly closing a sale, "always reminds me of a man riding a horse that he wants to have jump over a hurdle. He mounts the horse, gets up speed, brings him to the hurdle, helps him gather himself for the leap—and then the horse does one of two things: He goes over the fence or he braces his feet. And the rider does one of two things: He goes over the fence or he stays in the saddle.

Ask for an Order if You Want One

"The salesman who goes after an order does one of two things: He either gets the order or he doesn't. And the salesman who goes after the order and comes back with only a promise gets just about as much satisfaction out of his work as the hurdler whose horse decides to brace his feet."

A salesman for an installment publishing house had slumped off badly. His sales manager made a number of suggestions in the hope of correcting the trouble.

The tone of the letter brought the salesman face to face with the necessity of getting orders or admitting failure. So that night he took stock of himself. He analyzed every step in the interviews he had that week and much to his amazement found that out of twenty-five interviews he had only once actually asked for an order!

More Orders from a Day's Calls

He spent the next day in going back over those twenty-five calls and asked each prospect, in the course of conversation, four questions. Each of these questions was based upon the assumption that the man had already decided in his own mind to buy, and in answering them affirmatively the prospect assumed consent, a plan with which you of course are familiar.

As a result the salesman actually took five orders from the first twenty of the calls, and probably would have made it six had time permitted making the whole twenty-five.

Many other cases could be cited of salesmen who have been able to double and treble their earnings by working out some better plan for

increasing the percentage of closed orders to calls. But you are not so much concerned with what other salesmen have done, as you are with what you can do. What you want to know is how you can make more money by increasing your percentage of closes; how you can cut down *your* percentage of "almost" orders; how you can make the man who tells you what a wonderful proposition you have, and how some day he hopes to buy, want it so badly that he will find a way to get it, regardless of all the reasons in the world why he should not buy *now*.

In the following chapters I will try to give you, out of the experience of just such men as I have mentioned above, some of the suggestions that will help you to be a better closer. But you must not expect to find plans all ready to lift out and use. It is doubtful if any of them will fit just as they are offered. You will have to give most of them a new coat of paint.

II—Soliciting Business Versus Closing Sales

ONE of the most common causes of orders being deferred is the attitude which the salesman holds toward his job.

There are, unfortunately for themselves, a great many salesmen who have an idea that selling goods is a sort of social pastime. The scheme, as they see it, is to just keep "dropping in" on a man for a friendly visit and sooner or later he will give you an order.

Seldom indeed does the professional caller lay out any prearranged plan of campaign. On his way to the office, or after breakfast in the hotel, he decides whom he will call on first, and then he stands on the street corner and flips a coin to decide who will be next.

Contrast this haphazard manner of operating with the practice of a salesman who holds a record as a sure-fire closer for a large typewriter company. This salesman lays the foundation for each day's work far in advance. As he walks along the corridors of the big New York office buildings he listens for the click of old, worn out typewriters. His trained ear easily detects them. On some pretense or another he gets from the opera-

tor in that office a sample of the work that machine is producing. He gets his friends to save for him specimens of poor typing. In the evening he takes these specimens and copies them on his new machine. The original done on the old machine, and the copy done on the new machine are then filed away.

Each morning this salesman goes to his file and selects several of these exhibits located in one locality. He arranges them in order of call so as to conserve his time as much as possible, for he knows only too well that his day's accomplishment depends on his getting in the greatest possible number of selling hours. It is always his aim to cut down the time usually wasted by salesmen on street cars and in going from prospect to prospect. Then he takes each exhibit, and lays out a definite canvass to fit each case.

What a Definite Plan Will Do

We will suppose that the first man to be called on is a lawyer. His exhibit in this case is a brief which the lawyer had prepared for a client, who happened to be a friend of the salesman's. The plan of campaign is therefore based on the loss of prestige which the lawyer is suffering through sending out such discreditable briefs. By "comparing the work" the salesman was able to lay

the case before the prospect in such a way that there was no possible room for argument. The lawyer's natural pride in having the briefs which he had spent long hours in writing neatly typed sold him on wanting the better typewriter, and the objection to spending the money was quickly overcome when the salesman pointed out to the lawyer that he was paying for the machine in loss of efficiency and output anyway, so he might as well have the better grade of work since it wouldn't cost him a penny more per thousand words!

The Strange Case of Jim Sorency

"That sort of thing is all very well for a typewriter salesman," pipes out the man in the back seat who sells a long line of products to established trade, "but my line is different."

But is it as different as you think? Take the case of Jim Sorency, a Waggener paint salesman. Jim had a customer about fifty miles out of Kansas City whom he had been selling off and on for years. But he had never been able to get this dealer to handle his line exclusively, and Jim was the kind of salesman who was never satisfied until he had made every dealer a 100 per cent customer.

About a month ago Jim got wind that there

was going to be a big auction sale in the dealer's town the following Saturday. He knew what Saturday auction sales are in small towns and he knew that everybody for miles around would be there. So Jim separated himself from some of the Ozark dust he had picked up during the week, put on a clean pair of suspenders, caught the midnight train and arrived at the auction sale early Saturday morning about the time most traveling men were debating with themselves whether or not it was time to get out of the hay, or whether they had not better go on to the next town as all their customers would be attending the auction sale anyway.

The Making of a 100 Per Cent Customer

According to Ralph Mitchell, boss of the Waggener salesman, Jim became acquainted with nearly everyone at the sale and soon made himself solid all around. He specialized on kissing the babies and preaching the economy of good paint —a great stunt of Jim's that he has forgotten to copyright, by the way.

At the opportune time Jim got hold of the paint dealer whom he was gunning for, and taking him aside, unfolded his plan to put the whole storeful of competitive paint up at auction! After the

paint had all been bought up by Jim's newly-made friends the dealer found himself in a dilemma. He had no more paint left! But Jim was equal to the emergency. He sold him his complete line and made him a 100 per cent customer.

Now, there are two reasons why these salesmen get signed orders while the man who just "drops in" to see if he can sell something today will in all probability fail. First, the salesman has something definite to talk about. He has a carefully defined plan of action to follow, which in itself gives him a psychological advantage. The plan is effective because it is built up around the prospect's problem. It interests him because it concerns something close to his heart. Second, the salesman has a greater chance to get an order because the enthusiasm generated by the plan he has conceived is contagious. The man you are selling cannot help but be influenced by it.

Sell Functions—Not Materials

So important does the Burroughs Adding Machine Company consider this matter of having a clearly defined plan of action that it insists upon each salesman making a careful analysis of a prospect's figure work before attempting to sell an adding machine.

"Since we have done this," says C. W. Treadwell, manager of sales instruction for this aggressive organization, "we find that the ratio of closed orders to calls has considerably increased. In analyzing the prospect's problems in order to get up his proposal the salesman is almost sure to locate a weakness in the man's present system that is causing him considerable loss.

When the Buyer Feels He Is Being Trapped

"This knowledge fortifies the salesman in presenting his proposition, and most important of all, it creates a confidence that tends to make the salesman more persistent and more aggressive. He is somewhat like the poker player who can afford to be cool and good natured because he knows of the extra ace he has tucked away back in the corner."

Another common mistake by salesmen that affects their percentage of closes is the mistaken idea that the way to close a man is to hedge him in on all sides with arguments so that he can't possibly get out, and then gaff him. These tactics are an outgrowth of the so-called "one call" school of selling practiced by certain investment houses and instalment book salesmen. The plan is to get the prospect to make certain admissions, which is called "qualifying," and then strong arm him.

Undoubtedly there are times when such tactics win. There are even salesmen who have made a big success using them. But in selling ninety-nine out of one hundred propositions it is a mistake to do or say anything that will cause the buyer to feel he is being trapped. You can't possibly gain anything by robbing a man of his self-respect. And in the second place we all have an inborn instinct, handed down perhaps by our monkey forebears, to dodge traps of all kinds.

Always Have a Gate Open

The "hedging in" strategy may be all right in the court room for forcing an admission from an unwilling witness, but it is utterly unsuited to forcing an order from an intelligent prospect. Even a proposition which justifies high pressure tactics will be easier to close if the salesman in planning his canvass leaves a visible avenue of escape. At the same time, however, you should not let your desire to permit the prospect to sell himself impair your control of the interview at any stage. It is absolutely vital to closing that you keep the reins firmly in your hand. Once you let the prospect get the bit in his mouth you are likely to end up with his selling you instead of your selling him.

Now, being in control of the interview does not mean that you should be a sort of ring master, and that every time the customer balks your job is to flick him with your whip. Neither does it mean that you should adopt the attitude of a superior being and treat the prospect as though he were some schoolboy at the knees of his teacher. This sounds elementary, and a ridiculously obvious statement to make in a manual for salesmen who know their business, yet it is surprising how many salesmen—yes, and seasoned veterans on the sales forces of large concerns—think they can get business by sweeping the small buyer off his feet and taking the order from him.

Don't Worry About the Close

The truly successful salesman has the faculty of always keeping on the mental level of the man he is selling. He does not treat the prospect as though he were a nincompoop, nor on the other hand does he set him upon a pedestal. Throughout his canvass he adopts a tone of humility. But with it all he keeps the rudder in his hands, and tactfully and firmly, by indirect suggestions and adroit questioning steers the interview down the course to the signed order.

While the close is the most critical phase of the sale and the one which calls for the finest display

of skill on the part of the salesman it is highly important that you do not magnify its difficulties. Young salesmen especially suffer on this account. If you think too much of the close you are likely to suffer from stage fright when the time comes, and the dread thus produced will defeat you just as surely as anything that the prospect could do or say.

Do not, therefore, feel that there is anything especially difficult about closing a sale, but on the contrary try to think of it as the natural result of a well planned and ably executed canvass. In nearly every case a sale, if properly carried to the closing point, will close itself. Indeed there are many salesmen whose only closing stratagem, if such it might be called, is to stop talking when they feel the time has arrived, and in this way put the prospect in the position of having to come to a decision.

III—Thinking in Terms of Closed Orders

A HIGHLY successful salesman, a man who is now general manager of his company, was asked by a beginner how he could tell when it was time to close the buyer after he had got in to see him.

The old timer's reply was a classic. Said he: *"Don't wait until you get to him, sell him on the way. Simply go to get the order signed."*

Here is a bit of homely advice that will make hundreds of dollars for you if you put it to work. It covers one of the principal factors in closing sales—getting the right mental attitude. So long as you are content to *"hope"* that you will get an order from the man you are about to interview you can expect to keep on hoping, while the man who *"knows"* he is going to get the order, gets it.

Unless you are absolutely sure of getting an order when you enter the presence of a buyer, you will find it very difficult to make the buyer believe that he should give you the order today and not some other time. Lacking determination you cannot so easily resist negative influences. The first thing you know you will be looking for reasons why the prospect should not give you an

order, instead of finding reasons why he should buy NOW.

A salesman for the J. E. Porter Corporation, making a line of barn equipment, had fallen into the habit of using Lansing, Michigan, merely as a place to change cars. In spite of the fact that he spent several hours there every trip he had no established dealer in that territory.

Merely a Place to Change Cars

On a recent inspection trip, C. E. Beattie, sales manager for the company, asked the salesman how it happened that he had no account in Lansing. The salesman said there was only one hardware dealer in town who would be likely to consider the proposition at all, and there was no use trying to sell him because he was a price cutter! In other words the salesman had "sized" the dealer up without trying to sell him and allowed a negative reason to outweigh the positive reasons. The sales manager, however, didn't believe in "sizing up" prospects. He insisted that the salesman accompany him to the dealer's store and get his order, then *after* the order had been secured they would find out if there was any reason why he was not a desirable account. The idea was not to go into the dealer's presence in a half-hearted attitude.

It turned out that the dealer wasn't a price cutter at all. The salesman had jumped to this conclusion because the merchant had a sign in the window which stated: "We meet all mail order competition." The account has since developed into one of the best in Michigan, and the pity of it is that for years this business went elsewhere simply because the salesman in that territory thought backwards.

A Case Where Attitude Closed the Sale

Still another illustration: When S. S. Santmyers, now sales manager for the Jenkins Brothers, the valve people, was a youngster in school he sold life insurance for a local agency on one of those famous spare time arrangements. "In every case," said Mr. Santmyers, "where I was told by two or more people that a certain man was a prospect for insurance I sold that man a policy. I noticed this fact after two or three incidents and by watching it in subsequent cases it became almost a superstition with me. As I look back on it now it is perfectly evident that the insurance was sold long before I made contact with the prospect. It was simply a case of where I thought I could and I did. I feel sure now, after a broader experience, that if I had made myself feel toward

every prospect the same certainty of getting a policy as I did toward leads that were mentioned by two or more people that I should have been tremendously more successful."

It cannot be too emphatically stated that every sale you make is made first in your own mind before you even set foot in the prospect's office. You cannot close business unless you think in terms of closed business. You can probably recall surprise orders that you have taken—orders that you didn't really expect to get. But did you really take them? Were they not handed to you?

Orders that Are Sold Before You Call

As a matter of fact it has been established that eighty-five per cent of the orders taken by salesmen, in lines known to the buyer by reputation, *are bought.* In only fifteen per cent of the cases does the salesman actually make the sale. This percentage increases, however, until we find in such lines as life insurance and advertising that the percentages are reversed, and that in eighty-five per cent of the cases the salesman actually sells the order and in only fifteen per cent of the cases have outside forces closed the sale.

It is truly amazing when you stop to consider some of the victories that have been won simply because a fighting salesman had made up his mind

to get a certain piece of business. Time after time men have gone out on what seemed like hopeless errands, and come back with the order, for no other reason in the world except an undeniable determination to have it. Call it "mental domination," "the will to win" or plain everyday bullheadedness if you wish, but there is no denying that the man who comes to you with his mind made up as to just what he wants, why he wants it and how he is going to get it, usually gets it.

He Turned "Mac" Down Cold

"Some years ago," relates Mr. A. MacLachlan, sales manager for Square D switches, "I sold a general line of electrical goods for one of the big jobbing houses. I made my second call on a contractor who had never done any business with my house and who was buying all his supplies from cut-price houses. He had told me on my first call that there was no service I could render him, and that as our prices were higher on the same merchandise, I never could expect any business from him.

"It plainly was up to me to figure out some way to do something the cut-price salesman wasn't doing for him, in order to get the contractor over on my side of the fence.

"The cut-price salesman was giving him lower

prices than I could on the same material; he was saving him money on his purchases. There are two ways for a business man to accumulate money—one is to save money on his purchases and the other is to sell merchandise at a profit. The other salesman was saving him money on his purchases—something I couldn't do. Therefore, my course was clear—*it was up to me to sell some merchandise for him at a profit.*

Is It Ever "Too Late" to Make Money?

"The contractor was the buyer, foreman and owner of his business. It was about five o'clock when I called and he was on his way back to the office. When he came in, I asked him what job he was working on. He told me he had secured a job installing several motors in a factory.

"I asked, 'Did you sell the motors?'

" 'No,' he said.

"I asked him why not.

"He replied, 'The general manager has already decided to buy the motors direct from the factory and he has promised the order to the manufacturer's salesman, who is a friend of his.'

"I said, 'Well, it isn't too late to get that order yet. Call that man on the telephone and tell him that you have a motor expert here from the fac-

tory and that he wants to talk to him about his equipment.'

" 'It's too late,' he said, 'I tell you he's already decided what motors he is going to buy and has practically placed his order.'

"I replied, 'There's one thing you've got to learn. That is that it is *never too late for you to make money.* You don't make any money on the motors the other fellow sells your customer. Now, I'm going out there and sell him these motors and make some money for you.'

"So I had him call the man on the telephone and make an appointment for me at ten o'clock the next morning.

He Had Promised the Order to a Friend

"At ten o'clock the next morning I walked in on the general manager of the factory and asked him to take me over the factory and show me the type of machinery his motors were to operate. Then I sat down and with the aid of a pencil and a piece of paper, explained to him graphically just how the motors which I was selling would operate on his equipment. After I had finished my explanation and had recommended the proper types and sizes of motors, I opened my order book, wrote up the order and passed it over to him to sign.

"Very much surprised, he said, 'Why, I've already promised the order to a friend of mine. I thought you understood that.'

"I replied, 'Well, after you buy these motors, they are yours and you are the man who has to live with them, and if I were going to have to use them in my factory, I would be very sure that I purchased the right kind of equipment.'

"Bear in mind that the sizes I had recommended were exactly the same as he had already decided to purchase and the things I had to sell him on were the quality and superior performance in his factory of the motors which I was selling.

"Mac" Didn't Know What "No" Meant

"Reaching for the telephone, I said, 'I'll just have these motors come ahead and you can wire your friend cancellation of your promise.'

"Taking the receiver off the hook, I asked for Western Union and handed him the telephone.

"When I returned to the contractor's place with the order for the motors, he was very much surprised and I used it as an opener for securing a very good-sized order of supplies and getting a new customer for the house."

Here you have an excellent example of how *positive* thinking influences positive action. Had

Mr. MacLachlan gone to this manufacturer "hoping" that something might give him an opportunity to switch the business, he would have come back empty-handed. But Mr. MacLachlan is not one of the hoping kind. He made up his mind to get that contractor's order, regardless of what the contractor had decided, and he got it. If you make up your mind in the same way you can get them, too. But you must think in terms of closed orders. Give your hopeful propensities a much-needed vacation.

Keep on the Main Track

Another suggestion: Concentrate on the one big objective—getting the order. Too many men dream and call it thinking. It is hard work to keep your mind on one thing—to get going on the main track, as it were, and stay there. We are inclined to wander around; to run off on side tracks; to try to think of too many things at one time. As a result our mental effort is spread over too many things and our efforts lack tenacity of direction.

Successful closers rid their minds of everything excepting thoughts which have to do with getting the order signed. Of course, it is mighty fine for us to have the bigger interests of the company at heart, and to carry around with us a feeling of

responsibility for the success of the whole enterprise.

But this can be carried too far. It is just as if your sales manager back at the office shouldered the responsibility of the credit manager and the traffic manager as well as his own, and divided his mental effort between the three departments of the business instead of concentrating on sales alone. You know what would happen were he to do that. The selling end of the business would soon go to pot. Your job as a salesman is to get *orders,* more *orders* and still more *orders.* Today's records are tomorrow's targets. There is no such thing as a salesman who is getting all the business to be had, for there is always a way to get *more* business.

IV—A Good Finish Follows a Good Start

SOME twenty years ago, when Pyle's Pearline was a big seller, a salesman by the name of Dunn got a job selling Babbitt's Cleanser.

After a two weeks' effort Dunn had just about come to the conclusion that he was trying to sell a line that couldn't be sold. Nearly every dealer he called on assured Dunn he would gladly give him an order but Babbitt's simply would not sell alongside of Pyle's. They would listen to Dunn tell about the superior quality, and agree with everything he would say except to agree to give him an order.

But before giving up and admitting that he had been licked, Dunn decided to investigate and find out if Pyle's was really such a good seller as it was pictured, or if the dealers were simply bunking him.

What he did was this: He selected several dealers whom he had called on some time previously and whom he figured had forgotten him by this time. He set his sample case down outside the store, and walking boldly in sang out "Pyle's Pearline." That was all he said.

"Pyle's Pearline!" the dealer exclaimed. "Noth-

ing doing. I know you have a good product and I sell some every now and then, but in this neighborhood Babbitt's has the call. I'm impartial and would like to give you an order if I could, but I have got to buy what my customers call for, you know."

"Got plenty of Pearline on hand?" Dunn asked.

"Plenty," replied the dealer. "In fact all I need for several weeks."

"How often have you ordered Babbitt's?" Dunn asked then.

Putting One Over on the Dealer

"Pretty often," the dealer assured him. "You know it is a fast seller. They are always trying to work up some sort of an advertising idea to help us move the stock. It is too bad your house doesn't go in more for that sort of thing."

"Get me straight on this," said Dunn, "I'm selling Babbitt's."

"You told me you were selling Pearline," the dealer replied with some heat.

"You misunderstood me," Dunn corrected. "I came in here and sang out 'Pyle's Pearline' and before I had a chance to say another word you began to tell me what a hard time you had selling it and how much better you did with Babbitt's.

So, I am ready to take your order, and am glad the goods are moving so well."

The dealer, however, didn't give Dunn any order, but he did open his eyes to a condition that has a great deal to do with closing the sale. It convinced Dunn that it was a mistake to go around just asking for orders. He was forever satisfied that no matter what you were selling, buyers did not want it, and invariably would tell you the first thing that came to mind to get rid of you quickly.

It's Profit Talk that Rings the Bell

This is true of every line, selling specialties or selling staples, and it will continue to be true just so long as the feeling exists that salesmen are men who seek to exchange something you don't want for something you do.

In order to overcome this resistance and close the order, it is essential that you make the man realize he is sick before you can get him to take medicine.

"You ask me to tell you how to close a higher percentage of your interviews?" said E. G. Weir, whose success in selling Round Oak stoves won him the advertising managership of that concern. "There is no secret to that. Simply translate the

thing you are selling into terms of profits and prestige for the buyer.

"If I were selling addressographs I wouldn't talk about a machine that addresses envelopes five times as fast as you can typewrite them. Not by a jug full. I would tell my prospects that I have a means of increasing their present sales, profits and prestige, while reducing overhead—and get them to admit that anything which would do that year after year with increasing response is a dividend paying investment that warrants immediate favorable consideration.

How Salesman Weir Got Attention

"Isn't that a lot different from talking about the weather or Babe Ruth or horse races or some other remote thing that seems to be an entree into the fellow's good graces? Doesn't eliminating the old-time 'stuff' improve your chances for getting a signed order?

"The days are going fast. The hours that you can spend face to face with buyers are short. The hours of undivided attention are the most difficult things to secure in the world. When you can secure such attention and complement it in less than sixty seconds, that man is going to listen to your story.

"I have no fight with the folks who are corral-

ling all the gold in the world. I speak of the Hebrew race. But some sixteen years ago I sold that class of people merchandise, and of all people they are the most difficult to see if you want to sell and the easiest to see if you want to buy.

"But I was selling. I found that they didn't want to see me. It was up to me to get their attention. What did I do? I tramped on their corns. I reached over and plunked down on their corns. I really did this, I am not 'stuffing' you. When they would get red and mad all over, I knew that I had their attention. Then I would say: 'I was clumsy, wasn't I, but profits, profits for you today and profits you haven't dreamed of.'

Magical Words for Making Sales

"Now, that doesn't make much sense, but it had a very soothing effect on my customer and as I would say it into his ear it seemed to nullify the pain in his toe. 'Profits today that you never dreamed of' never failed me. It always made them forget all about their pain and say: 'Vere iss it?"

"That isn't a joke. I am telling you the truth. You can't beat profit talk for getting results. 'Profits' and 'prestige' are magical words. That is what everybody wants. No matter how much of a crook your prospective buyer is he always

wants prestige 'while reducing overhead.' Can you think of a more magical word for business today than that? 'And continues to do so year after year.' Is it any wonder that they want to look quickly. It isn't a Seidlitz powder or a Bromo-Seltzer which lasts only for a minute—it is 'year after year with increasing proportions.' The further you go the better it sounds."

Next to getting the right mental attitude toward the sale, this matter of talking from the prospect toward your proposition, instead of the other way around, is the most important. In most cases these two factors alone make or break a sale.

Guide the Buyer—Don't Drive Him

Another point that will help you in laying the foundation for a close is to avoid anything during the interview that will cause the buyer to feel that you are doing his thinking for him. The whole fabric of your sales talk, even the close itself, must be built of indirect suggestions of a positive nature.

J. G. Chapline, a man who is regarded as being one of the most successful instalment book salesmen of the last decade, and now at the head of The LaSalle Extension University, contends that suggestion is the greatest power at the command of the salesman. "Through suggestion," said Mr.

Chapline, "you are able to establish a condition of receptivity in the mind of the man you are selling which will make the close almost automatic."

Before leaving the subject of laying a foundation for the close it might be well to emphasize the importance of getting the man you are selling away from outside interruptions if you possibly can. Many a sale has been lost just as it was on the verge of being closed by the ringing of a telephone bell, or the interruption of a clerk. Many a good order has "gone West" because of the interruption of a customer requiring a sack of Bull Durham.

Distractions that Make Closing Hard

If you are selling a product that must be demonstrated, and are fortunate enough to have a demonstration room at your disposal, take care to see that there is nothing in this room which will detract the buyer's mind from what you are saying.

If there is a clock in the room, take it out. If you have pictures in the room, even pictures that have a bearing on the sale, take them down. If you have advertising literature stacked here and there, throw it out, for there is nothing more aggravating than to try to close a prospect who is

dividing his attention between what you are saying and a book in his hand.

The less there is for the prospect to look at, or play with, or wonder about, the more attention he is going to give to you.

This same idea applies to making sales to office men. Try to get them off by themselves when possible. On some pretext or other get them to take you out into the stock room or into a director's room. Of course, you cannot always do this, but it is a suggestion which will save a lot of sales for you.

One Way to Get Undivided Attention

One salesman selling a set of books had a special folder made up on which were pasted sample pages from the books, specimen backbones in different bindings, etc. The salesman used to lay this affair over the desk of the man upon whom he was calling, and in that way prevent him from thinking about papers on the desk!

To the salesman who has never attempted high pressure salesmanship, and who gets business on a good will basis, this no doubt seems far fetched —the kind of theory that one reads about in some of these books on salesmanship, but seldom meets in real life. But any salesman selling what might be termed an "unwanted" commodity knows only

too well that it is upon just such little trifles that sales are won or lost.

Much of the success achieved by A. P. Hoffman, of the Burroughs Adding Machine Company's New York sales force, was a result of such a trivial thing as calling "trial" machines "samples." Hoffman suspected that when he suggested to the prospect that he put a machine in on trial it made it too easy for him to send it back. So he said nothing about the machine being on trial. Instead he told the prospect that his company is putting out a certain number of sample machines for advertising purposes in that territory and they had selected him (the prospect) as a man whom they wished to have become familiar with the Burroughs. Out of seventy-five installations of this kind which Hoffman made last June he closed twenty-two orders. He could not have done this had he not laid the right kind of foundation.

V—Helping the Buyer to Decide

WHEN H. J. Heinz used to call on the trade with his horse radish, the first of the famous fifty-seven varieties, he always kept his eyes open for an opportunity to pass out money-making ideas. If he observed a wilted bunch of lettuce in the store he would explain to the dealer how by occasionally sprinkling produce of this sort with water it would keep better. On other occasions he would suggest combination counter displays to his customers, such as a display of cream cheese, currant jam and hard crackers for making barley-duc. As a result Heinz soon built up an excellent trade for his horse radish, and laid the foundation for what has since become one of the largest businesses of its kind in the world.

I mention this, not thinking you are not already doing this, but to bring out the point that selling is not a battle of wits in which the man who can argue the hardest or talk the fastest captures the honors.

On the contrary, the skillful salesman is very careful not to force his conclusions on the buyer. He knows very well that people are slow to respond to the opinions of other people, but they

become very enthusiastic and will fight at the drop of the hat for ideas which germinate in their own minds, even though they have been put there by the subtle suggestions of a clever salesman.

All through your interview take the attitude that you are there, not to make the man you are selling do something he doesn't want to do, but merely to help *him to decide.* Let your whole bearing, the tenor of your remarks, the direction of your logic, take that tack.

The Power of Well Put Questions

At times you feel tempted to reason with the buyer. He will bring up objections which sound most illogical and foolish. But don't be tempted. Remember that you are not there to win a debate, but to get an order. The moment you begin to reason with a prospect you irritate him by your implied superior knowledge. You can prove to a man logically that he is wrong and that you are right, but he will not like you for doing it, and he will be just that much less inclined to give you an order. *No customer likes to have a salesman prove that he is a better man mentally,* any more than you like to have some one prove that they are better than you physically.

When objections are raised that must be met, treat them lightly, *as though they were questions.*

The very fact that you do not attach importance to them minimizes them in the mind of the prospect.

Should the buyer make an arbitrary statement that challenges you, and makes you itch to contradict him, the situation can be handled much more satisfactorily by persuasion than by argumentation. A sales manager in the electrical field relates the following incident which illustrates this point:

He Was One of the "Know-it-all" Type

"Several days ago I met a pleasant traveling companion. We spent the whole evening together. The one thing I liked most about this man, and the one thing he liked best about me, I think, was that we did not clash. Each was tolerant of the other's ideas. Toward the close of the evening, however, he made this arbitrary statement: 'Hot air furnaces are absolutely no good. I wouldn't have one in my house. The system is all wrong.'

"The principles of hot air heating are familiar to me, and I knew this man's statement was absurd. I knew it was one of those generalities that it would not pay to check him up on because I could easily prove that he was wrong. My first impulse was to do this but I checked the impulse. I let the matter drop for a few moments, talked

about something else, and then began like this:

" 'You know, I had a funny experience the other day. The family of a neighbor that I have known for a number of years has not been very well; the children have been rather sickly. I was over there the other day and they all looked healthy. I asked for the reason.

A Good Example of Indirect Selling

" ' "Well," he said, "I had a man come up here a few months ago and cut a large hole in the cellar wall. He cut another hole near the outside front door and two more holes near the bay windows, then he put a furnace in the center of the cellar and he ran pipes from these holes to the bottom of the furnace, where he placed a fan. When I build a fire in the furnace I start the fan. All the foul and impure air that is in the room is forced outdoors, and fresh air from the outside is pulled in and heated and forced into the room so that my children are breathing warm air as pure as they would find it if they went out for a walk.' "

"I told the story simply as a story and went on talking about something else. Later I asked my friend in a jesting way: 'Say, old man, are you quite so sure about your opinion of hot air heat as you were an hour ago?'

" 'No,' he admitted, 'I have been turning it over in my mind and I am beginning to think there is a good deal of truth in that story you told me.'

"I smiled. I had used 'old stuff' on him. I sidestepped the issue when he raised it, went around the back door, came in, spread a little propaganda to direct his train of thought toward the desired goal and then let him sell himself."

The "Yes" Plan of Closing

Another stratagem successfully used by a great many salesmen, especially in so-called "high pressure" selling, is to get the prospect into an agreeable frame of mind just as soon as possible and then lead him on from one agreement to another until he has the habit. Then when you ask him to agree to give you an order he is just that much more apt to do so. This is called the "yes" method of closing.

A life insurance salesman, for example, starts in by getting the prospect to agree that it is a nice day, or that his offices are very bright and cheerful. Then he leads him on, tactfully and adroitly, from that small beginning to get him to agree that life insurance is a good thing. The next step is to get him to agree that every man should invest a percentage of his income in insurance, and so on

up the ladder until finally the salesman gets him to agree to be examined.

Getting the prospect to say "yes, sir" is not necessarily getting him to agree with you, however. We all know prospects who will look you straight in the eye and agree with anything you say, but all the time they are thinking about something else. Too often, I am sorry to say, they are thinking: "How long is this nuisance going to keep me from my work?"

This kind of a "yes" is what some salesmen call "kissing you out of the office." It is quite different from the "yes" of a man who has thought over your remark and after weighing it carefully told you that you are right.

"Stunts" Are a Poor Substitute for Facts

But whatever plan you may follow for helping the buyer to decide it should have one general aim, namely, to *make it harder for your prospect to go backward and turn you down than it is to go forward and order.* There is a whole bookful of sound logic in this single statement. Read it over, and think it over.

However, don't make the mistake of thinking that this sort of strategy in itself will close orders. There may be instances where a salesman has walked into a man's office and by some clever trick

come out with an order. All the strategy in the world won't take the place of *facts*. The best salesmen in every organization, the men who are making the big money and who are consistently producing business day after day and year after year, are not merely strategists, but men who know their proposition backwards and frontwards, upside down and downside up, as well. Strategy will help you to close more sales, but it is useless unless it is backed up by knowledge.

Burt Sheldon, whose good work with the Crystal Corporation has attracted national attention, tells of an early experience which made a lasting impression upon him.

Even the District Manager Failed

"It was up to our organization," said Mr. Sheldon to sell a certain man in a certain community. If he bought, our path to success was straight and easy. If he didn't we were stopped.

"I tried and failed. Our sales manager sailed in like a lion but came back whipped. He wired the home office and they sent on a special man.

"To the untrained eye, there was nothing remarkable about this main office star. His presence was far from striking, and he seemed much better as a listener than a talker.

" 'Lead me to it,' was all that he said, after we had explained the situation.

"I did the introducing and settled down to watch the star go into action against what I considered hopeless odds. The prospect was a tough nut but the star produced a hammer hard enough to crack him. The hammer was *facts*. He merely banged away with his facts for awhile, answered every objection, and came away with the order that he had traveled 1,200 miles to get.

"There was no mystery about it. If I had known as much about what we were selling and the company that put it out, I could have made the sale myself; so could almost any other member of our local organization.

Knowing Why Did the Trick

" 'You surely do know this proposition,' I remarked to the star on the way back to the office. He must have caught a note of disappointment, for he smiled and said: 'But you don't think I am much of a salesman at that, do you, kid?'

" 'Expected to see some Daniel Webster stuff, didn't you—table pounding, hypnotism, psychology and all that sort of thing? Well, I don't work that way. I just know that our proposition is the best value on the market and know why. If a man has the money and needs what we have

to sell, all he wants is the plain truth, and the wiser he is the quicker he will buy.'

"Right there I determined that the ordinary catch-as-catch-can patter about a commodity would never satisfy me, so I have never sold anything since about which I didn't know just a little bit more than my most intelligent prospect."

A great many salesmen make the mistake of trying for a close with a bunch of photographs, sheets of statistics and advertising literature laid out before the prospect. There are circumstances when this is necessary. But wherever possible avoid it because while you are showing a man one thing, his mind is wandering all over the page.

Be Careful in Using Statistics

In nine cases out of ten the buyer will see something on the sheet that will cause him to ask irrelevant questions, resulting in your getting on to a side track. In the same way if you have documents spread out in front of the man there is always a possibility that he will pick one up and begin to ask questions just at a time when you are especially anxious to have his undivided attention.

Statistics have a very important place in the sale, and properly used they are a powerful factor in closing business, but it is much the better plan

to carry them in your head and write them down on paper as you go along. This is an old trick which you probably use, but it is a winner for getting a man's full attention. Instead of his eyes wandering all over the store or the office, they follow your pencil.

One salesman who uses statistics in this way with great effectiveness is R. E. Perry, operating out of Reid, Murdoch's Milwaukee office. During the big holiday drive which this firm puts on every year for Monarch coffee, Mr. Perry approached a merchant by the name of Stancl.

The Buyer's Eyes Were Opened

Stancl, however, said "No" in his most emphatic way. He didn't want any more coffee. He didn't care if there was a contest. He had almost a case of it left over from last year and he wouldn't buy a nickel's worth this year, etc.

Instead of accepting his customer's decision, Salesman Perry asked him if he knew how much coffee was consumed in the United States every day.

No, he didn't know.

So Perry told him.

It was more coffee than Stancl thought there was in the whole world. Then Perry told him

what the per capita consumption of coffee was, just how many pounds the people in Milwaukee bought every day.

These big figures staggered Stancl. They made his "part of a case" look small indeed. The doubt began to seep into his mind whether, after all, he had enough coffee. And by the time the Reid-Murdoch man had brought the figures right down to the ward in which the Stancl store was located, and figured out for him just how much coffee was being consumed every day in the vicinity of his store, he was in full retreat.

The Final Order Was for Nine Cases

Stancl soon came to the conclusion that as a coffee merchant he was a minus quantity. If the salesman's figures were right they indicated he was getting less than one twentieth of the coffee business he ought to have. The thought of what was getting away aroused his fighting spirit. He gave Perry an order for three more cases and decided then and there to get busy.

Before the drive closed, Stancl not only sold the case he had on hand, as well as the three he had ordered, but had placed a repeat order which brought his total sales up to nine cases! Nine cases is pretty good for a man who doubted whether he could dispose of one.

VI—Knowing When to Close

A rising young lawyer was once asked by a Woman's Club to which his wife belonged to give a talk on a civic problem which at that moment was giving the dear ladies considerable concern.

The young man, anxious to outdo himself before his wife's friends, made a supreme effort. He talked for a solid hour.

At home that evening he asked his wife what she thought of his speech. The wife, who evidently didn't take much stock in the old adage about it being harder to hold husbands than to get them, replied: "It would have been wonderful, Charlie, if only you had known *when* to sit down."

There are a lot of salesmen who would be wonderful salesmen if only they knew *when* to "sit down." They are for all the world like a railroad without terminal facilities, they keep going and going, but they never arrive.

Just when a salesman should "sit down" has been a disputed point. There has been much written about the "psychological moment"—a mystical moment in the interview when the sales-

man presumably is supposed to make a few magic passes and tapping the prospect lightly on the forehead, to say the mystic "hokus, pokus, dominokus." Whereupon the prospect pulls his wallet out of his pocket and says to the salesman: "Here you are, Bill, help yourself."

"Closing should be viewed as a natural result of proper selling," says Edward K. Strong, Jr., in his book: "Strategy in Selling Life Insurance", "and not as a separate and distinct process.

Is There a "Psychological Moment?"

"One of the reasons why it is considered a separate process is because of the theory of a 'psychological moment.' Decisions are made suddenly. We may have agonized over a proposition for days or weeks and longer, but finally a decision is made and it seems to us that it could not have been made prior to that moment. This is all very true. But what it really means is that at that moment all the elements necessary for the decision have come to mind and the decision followed naturally because they were there."

This idea that sales are closed because some mysterious moment has happened to come along has done much to hinder the effectiveness of a great many salesmen. I will go even further and say that it has been the undoing of many young

salesmen who are inclined to theorize in their work. It has the very harmful effect of making a salesman over-estimate the importance of his closing tactics, and under-estimate the importance of knowing his proposition, and the proper planning and managing of the interview.

Stalking the mystic moment makes a salesman over-anxious, and raises in his mind unnecessary and hurtful fears. Supposing he should not recognize this mysterious moment when it arrives? It would cause him to become too intent on getting the order at the very time when he should display easy confidence and indifference!

Don't Put Off Closing Too Long

Another highly successful life insurance salesman, P. N. Albright of the Northwestern Mutual, calls the psychological moment theory "bunk" and suggests in a recent magazine article to form the habit of getting your proposition before the prospect at the earliest moment of the interview. The first time you make a complete statement of it your opportunity for closing is the best that you will ever have.

"Recently I wanted to trade automobiles and an old salesman took me out and demonstrated a car so successfully that I had decided to buy, but I did not voice my conclusion. After the demon-

stration he said to me, 'Come into the office and we will sign up.' I followed into the office and sat down; then followed a wonderful word picture of my new car by the salesman. While he was making this talk I thought of a friend who sold cars, and made an excuse to get out on the street. The sale was lost and my friend got the business. The old auto salesman missed the trick, because he did not understand that the sale was made when I accepted the invitation to enter his office. The only thing necessary was the application, the time for creating the desire had passed; signature and settlement were in order, but too much talk lost the sale."

Talking Yourself Out of an Order

Be ready for your close, not only at the end of the demonstration, or the presentation, as the case may be, but at any time during the interview, that the man you are selling indicates that he is ready to buy. That is the time to "sit down." Otherwise you take the hazard of losing his interest and clouding the desire which has crystallized in his mind.

Your prospect then will be very much in the same frame of mind as Mark Twain was when he listened to the sermon. You will remember that Mark went to church that Sunday fully deter-

mined to put a dollar in the plate, but the longer the minister talked the less he determined to give until finally by the time the plate was passed he decided that instead of his owing the plate anything the plate owed him a dollar, which he proceeded to take!

Some of you older salesmen will dispute this suggestion. You will say: "It is wrong to close a man until after he thoroughly understands just what he is buying. If you close him before you have thoroughly canvassed him he is likely to cancel as soon as your back is turned."

Keep Some Bullets in Reserve

This would be true if you took the man's order and then left him. But such a course is not contemplated. I am presuming that you are experienced enough to know that an order must be nailed down as well as closed, a phase of the sale which we will discuss more fully in a subsequent chapter. The plan of closing at the first opportunity, regardless of how far along you may be with your canvass, is best because you have everything to gain and nothing to lose. In the other plan you have nothing to gain and everything to lose. If for any reason you fail to close by an early effort, you are just where you were before, because you have all the balance of your ammu-

nition in reserve and it will be comparatively easy for you to revive the man's interest if you have the situation in hand.

If you succeed in closing him earlier than you had planned you can still tell him all the things that it is desirable for him to know. You can do this with just as good, or even better, effect than had you persisted in going through your entire canvass.

A Sure Way to Close More Business

Not long ago a salesman called at the office of the Streator Brick Company to get an order for some leather belting. He had called several times previously, and although he did not know it, had succeeded in convincing Mr. Plumb, the president of the concern, that the kind of leather belting which he was selling was a better investment than the kind of belting which the brick company was then using.

Instead of assuming that Mr. Plumb was sold and trying for an immediate close, the salesman went through the same demonstration which he had gone through before, repeated the same arguments, and after he was all through said he would call again.

After he had left, Mr. Plumb remarked to A. V. Smith, his sales manager, what a fool the

salesman had been. "I had my mind all made up to place an order," he said, "but I certainly did not propose to force it upon the man." The strangest thing of all, the salesman who made this inexcusable mistake had been selling belting for a number of years and thought he knew all there was to be known about salesmanship. It was one of those cases where knowing one's line had made a sale, but poor tactics lost it.

Here is a rule that you can write down in your note book. *Never leave a man's presence without trying four times for an order.* If you will do that simple thing you are absolutely sure of more business.

VII—The Final Push

IF the sale has been properly planned, and conducted according to that plan the close will take care of itself. It will come as the natural climax to the sequence of thought through which the salesman has taken the prospect.

But if the salesman has been unable to carry through his prearranged plan, or for any other reason allowed the management of the interview to get out of his hands, he may find himself in the position of the circus barker who has no one to start pushing the crowd into the tent.

To meet this situation three things should be done: First, summarize the strongest points in your interview—emphasizing especially those which you found had the strongest appeal to the man you are selling. Second: Put the prospect in a position where it is hard for him to go back, but easy for him to go ahead. Third: *When you have him in that position give him a final push.*"

Just what form this "final" push should take will vary according to the nature of your work. In the case of a salesman selling established trade it may consist merely of handing the buyer your order book and saying: "Just sign this." But even as simple as this sounds considerable finesse is called for here. Many salesmen make the mis-

take of using a negative suggestion in securing a merchant's signature to an order. They ask the buyer: *"Will you* please sign this?" Or worse still, they say: "Won't you please sign this?"

As I have pointed out in the foregoing chapter it is vital to the successful close to carefully avoid doing or saying anything that will suggest to your man the possibility of not having to comply with the salesman's request. When your request for his signature implies a favor, it gives the buyer an ascendancy over the seller. It suggests to him that he may not desire to sign the order. Invariably he will start to hedge, and even though he really needs the merchandise, he will balk at signing the order. In the period of haggling which naturally follows the buyer's refusal many sales are lost.

Bringing Home the Loss to the Buyer

In the case of a salesman selling a less tangible thing, such as life insurance or advertising we will say, the final push might be accomplished through the reverse reasoning—by that I mean picturing to the buyer what will happen if he *doesn't* act now.

The psychology of this plan is that in presenting your proposition you developed your case so that the man almost feels he is enjoying the ad-

vantages which you have pictured to him. Now you take these advantages away from him and make him feel the loss.

It is just like giving a small boy a nice big lolly-pop, letting him get a taste of it, and then suddenly taking it away from him. All his animal instincts to hold what he has are aroused and he is seized with a sudden determination to get back that lolly-pop or die in the attempt. The same instincts that make the small boy want the lolly-pop above everything else govern the boy after he grows to manhood.

Have You Four Good Closers?

While too much dependence should not be placed in the use of what are commonly known as "closing stunts" every salesman should nevertheless have at least four or five "closers" that he can bring into play when needed. If you are selling a product to retailers and the orders are to be put through a wholesale house a very useful "closer" is to say to the buyer: "Shall I send this through Jones and Jones?" Another good closer is: "Shall I ship these by freight or express?"

A popular "closer" used by life insurance salesmen is to ask the prospect if he wishes the policy made payable to his wife. There are any number of other "closers" which can be used, but they

differ with every line of business. Having given you these examples it should be an easy matter for you to construct a set that will best meet your requirements, if indeed you have not already done so.

At this stage it is very important that the salesman should not be too intense. Remember that poise counts quite as much as what you are saying. Strive to feel toward your prospect as you would toward an older brother who had come to you for help. Treat his objections as though they were questions. Do everything you can to prevent getting yourself in a position where the buyer can turn you down flat, but do not quit if he should say "No." Nine times out of ten he doesn't really mean that "No." It is just his way of defending himself against what he regards as your endeavor to pry loose his purse strings.

On Leaving Business for Business

It can generally be set down as a sound rule in selling that *it does not pay to leave business for business.* No less a salesman than Hugh Chalmers says that this is one of the ten cardinal principles of successful sales strategy. To quote Chalmers: "If you have a prospect partly worked up, stay with him until you get the name on the dotted line or else get a definite refusal. If you

leave him half sold to go after a prospect who looks easier you will lose him in nine cases out of ten." Remember Bell and the telephone—it was that last quarter turn of the screw that turned an unworkable mechanism into a billion dollar invention. Bell was a good closer—he stuck.

You often hear salesmen say: "I don't believe in forcing a sale. If a man isn't in the mood to close with me today, I find it best to come back later when he will be in the right mood." Now, there are times when it would be suicide to press a man for an order. But if you permit yourself to entertain fears about asking for an order except under most favorable conditions you will unconsciously develop the wrong attitude toward your work, and soon find yourself nesting on china eggs.

A Remarkable Record and Its Lesson

Life insurance is generally supposed to require at least three calls to get an order. There are salesmen who say it cannot be sold on one call. These men make a "get-acquainted" call, a "presentation" call, and a final "closing" call. Yet, during the year 1914, when conditions were very similar to what they now are, seven men working out of the Rochester office of the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company closed 62 per cent of

their business the first interview, and 24 per cent on the second interview, making a total of 86 per cent closed on the first and second interviews.

One of these men, Mr. Goodrich, closed 93 per cent on the first and second interviews; Mr. Judd, another salesman, closed 91 per cent; Mr. Beers, who is still one of the pace setters in this organization, closed 90 per cent and a Mr. Parker closed 97 per cent! It is especialy significant, that the newer men were the ones who made the best record—the chaps who went ahead and did it simply because they didn't know it couldn't be done.

How Much Time Are You Wasting?

Now if it is possible for a life insurance salesman to close 90 per cent of his business on the first and second interview, it is evident that you should hesitate a long while before calling back on a man more than twice. You cannot beat the law of averages, and the law of averages tell us that your chances of selling a man on whom you have previously called twice, as against selling a man to whom we have never talked are in the ratio of nine to one. In other words we stand practically no chance to get an order after we have tried twice so why waste our valuable time.

"That is all very well," you are saying, "but what are you going to do when a man asks you to

call back on a certain date to get the order? Are you going to tell him you only make two calls and if he won't give you the order today, he will be left in the lurch?" You will have to decide these cases on their merits individually. But get this: You can sell more by limiting your calls than you can by chasing futures. In the case of Salesman Beers, mentioned in the preceding page, he states that in 1912 before he took up two call selling he spent more than half his time with people upon whom he had called more than twice, while in 1914 when he never even had a second interview unless it was absolutely necessary, he closed 90 per cent of his business on the first and second call. In other words by eliminating call backs he was able to almost double the time available for spending in the presence of buyers, with a resulting increase in business. So you see it pays to stay with your man and close him on the spot if you possibly can.

He Didn't Want Any Advertising

Mr. E. T. Gray, sales manager of the Western division for Devoe and Raynolds, the paint people, tells of a Chicago advertising salesman who went to see a New England manufacturer about a national campaign. This manufacturer was making an article that the whole United States needed

but he was satisfied to confine his sales activities to a few nearby states.

The salesman arrived at the manufacturer's office late in the afternoon, got an immediate interview and spent two hours discussing the proposition. After he had finished he asked the manufacturer to authorize a test campaign. The manufacturer replied: "Your story sounds all right, but I don't want what you have to offer and that is all there is to it." His tone was final.

But the salesman knew the man did not mean what he said, because he knew this manufacturer wanted national prestige and a nation-wide business but his proverbial New England caution made him say "No."

The salesman looked the manufacturer in the eye for a moment. Then he decided to adopt heroic tactics. He determined to die with his shoes on if die he must.

"Mr. Conway," he said, "now that you have made your decision let me tell you what the 'it' means in your reply: 'that is all there is to it'. The 'it' means that you are perfectly satisfied to hide your light under a bushel. It means that you are satisfied to be a small toad in a small puddle. It means that you are satisfied to be a small manufacturer in a small community when you could be

the dominating manufacturer in this locality, serving the entire country, benefiting not only yourself but the people at large. It means that you are satisfied to stand still and gradually fall apart from your own inertia, for you cannot maintain your present organization unless you are able to hold out to them the hope of greater opportunities.

"Men of ability won't stay with a stagnant business any more than rats will stay on a leaking ship. That is what I think the *'it'* means in your reply to me."

The Salesman Talked from the Shoulder

The salesman was taking a long chance. Such tactics require a high order of salesmanship and considerable personality. But this man was a real salesman. He removed the sting. The manufacturer thought carefully for a moment, and then said: "When are you leaving town?"

"I have come here from Chicago especially to see you. Whenever you tell me you are not interested in my proposition, I will leave town."

"Well, suppose you drop in tomorrow morning, and I will give you my answer." The salesman got the order.

There are two noteworthy points in this incident. The first point is that the salesman had his strongest arguments in reserve, anticipating

that the manufacturer might balk at the idea of buying advertising like he bought bar steel.

Making It Easy for the Man to Buy

The second point is found in the salesman's reply to the prospect's question: "When are you leaving town?" The average salesman would have taken advantage of this opening to try for for an immediate close or would have "muffed" the opportunity altogether by mentioning some hour. But this salesman was shrewd enough to realize that his greatest obstacle was the prospect's having gone on record to the effect that he was not interested. He knew only too well that this type of buyer will hesitate a long, long time before he will reverse himself after having announced a decision. His pride prevents it. In answering this question the way he did the salesman lessened that obstacle.

So far as the salesman was concerned the prospect had not decided at all, he had merely evidenced a lack of understanding. As I said before, if you regard the buyer's "No" as a request for more information, and a signal to bring your heavier reserve batteries into action, you will find this word less odious.

A sales manager for one of the washing machine companies sat in the office of a local dis-

tributor talking to the manager. A few feet away a salesman was trying to sell a lady one of the washers made by the sales manager's concern. He listened attentively. In about twenty minutes the salesman came in and handed the order to the sales manager.

He said "No" Sixteen Times But Bought

"Jim," said the sales manager, "that was a hard order."

"No," he answered, "a comparatively easy one."

"How many times did the prospect say 'no' to you?"

"Not once," replied the salesman, yet the truth of the matter was that the prospect said "no" just sixteen times. The sales manager had counted them. The salesman never heard "No" because he was too wrapped up in his work.

In nearly every case where the salesman gets turned down flat, and in a way that it is difficult to recover himself, you can safely figure that he has been guilty of using negative tactics. It is impossible to over-emphasize here the importance of making *affirmative* closing suggestions. *Above all, don't ask questions which can be answered by "No"; don't debate; don't argue. Don't talk too much or too fast.*

Don'ts in Closing

(Reprinted with permission from the advance proofs of a manual for the salesmen of the National Cash Register Co.)

DON'T belittle the buyer's opinions or methods. It is better to keep him on good terms with himself.

DON'T antagonize him. Talk to him in a friendly, agreeable manner. Remember that honey attracts more flies than vinegar.

DON'T take an argumentative attitude. It is a trait of great men worth imitating to seem to be going along with the other fellow while you are really making him come your way.

DON'T assume that you know more about the buyer's business than he himself does for you cannot make him believe it even if you do.

DON'T trust to persuasion alone. Convince him.

DON'T dodge a question or objection. Answer it fairly and squarely.

DON'T talk for the sake of talking. Say something.

DON'T talk all the time. Give the buyer a chance. When he wants to make an objection, let him make it. It is much better out and answered than sticking in his mind.

DON'T think you are up against an impossible proposition. Other men are probably doing it elsewhere.

DON'T be a quitter. Never say: "This is too tough a proposition for me. I cannot sell this man." There is always a way to do anything which ought to be done. If you can't untie the knot, cut it.

VIII—Order Blanks as an Aid to Closing

PROBABLY you have heard about the baking powder salesman who had a customer that was prejudiced against signing any kind of printed order blanks.

To get around the difficulty this salesman used to go over to the wrapping paper roll, tear off a "hunk" of paper and then proceed to write up the order. After he had all the items down he would hand it to the grocer "to be sure he had it down right," and then he would ask the dealer to "OK" it by signing his name! The dealer willingly complied.

This is an extreme case, but it serves to illustrate the caution and hesitancy most men have in signing their names to anything that obligates them to do something. And because of this very natural impulse, you will frequently find salesmen who are even more afraid to ask a man to sign an order blank, than the man is to sign it.

The experienced salesman, however, knows that an order blank properly used is one of the best tools he can use in closing business. He also knows that improperly used it works just the other way.

A mistake commonly made by even veteran salesmen is to wait too long before producing the order blank. You can probably recall in your own experience many cases where you felt sure that you had your man sold "solid." He had agreed to everything you said, indicated that all his objections had been removed and had even told you the time he would want the goods shipped, but he backed right up and balked like a Missouri mule when you pulled your order book on him. It was just like sticking a pin into a toy balloon.

By getting your order book out early in the interview, before you even try for a close, he becomes used to it. The shyness which seizes him when it is suddenly produced at the end of the interview is avoided.

When Using a Pretext Is Good Strategy

One very successful hardware salesman pasted on the cover of his order book certain data such as he might need when the buyer asks "What special have you this trip?" This gives him the pretext he wants to get his order book into action and he keeps it open, ready for use, throughout the entire interview, just to get the buyer used to it.

Of course, it is not so necessary to use this stratagem in selling established trade, as your

customers know you are there to get an order and expect you to use a book. But in selling specialties or opening up new accounts a pretext avoids the appearance of being too sure of an order.

All of us, in recalling our prenuptial days, know what happens when we take the lady's consent for granted. It is perfectly all right to be certain of success in our own mind, but don't let Mr. Buyer know it or he won't stay hitched.

An Old Stunt—But a Good One

On this same point G. H. Young, who is now sales manager for Marshall Wells Company at Portland, says that in selling a new line he always makes it a point after the merchant has ordered the merchandise "on his hook" to try him on some special proposition. "Suppose, for example," explains Mr. Young, "I am calling on Mr. Brown, the leading hardware merchant at Brown's Junction. Mr. Brown 'reckons' he does not need the line of paints I want him to put in.

" 'All right, Mr. Brown, you're the doctor. You know your trade better than I do.' Then I would put my order book away.

"This has the effect of causing the dealer to lower his guard. Acting on the advantage, I compliment Mr. Brown on the remarkable success he has made of his business, and mention his high

standing as a merchant. Then I ask his advice as to just what kind of paint his trade wants. My deference to his judgment flatters him, and in almost every case I have been able to get advice by the yard.

"After he has told me just what the 'folks hereabouts' will buy and what they won't buy, and how different they are to the folks in any other community, I ask him in case he did put my paint in 'some' day what colors would sell the best.

"As he starts to tell me I take out my order book again, ostensibly to make note of the colors.

"After checking the colors, I ask him what size packages he thinks would sell the best.

The Buyer Sells Himself

"During this entire conversation I purposely keep his mind focused on the money he will make on selling the paint, and off of the money he must spend to buy it. This has the effect of stimulating his imagination, and he begins to hear the tuneful jingle of the cash register as the imaginary customers come into his store to buy.

"Next I ask the merchant what time of the year a line like mine would sell the best in his locality, and after he has come that far with me I can in nine cases out of ten get him to say that

I can ship him the colors and sizes that he has picked out at the time he mentioned. All this time I have been writing up the order and I then hand it to him for verification."

In the same way a salesman for a farm machinery house used his order blank to sell a man when he did not think he had a ghost of a chance. He met the man on the road driving to town. The farmer gave him a lift. While they were speeding along the conversation drifted into farm machinery channels, and the farmer indicated that after he got a little more money ahead he was going to buy some new machinery. The salesman questioned him further and threw out a number of suggestions which he allowed to germinate in the farmer's mind.

The "Writing-out-the-order" Close

After they had been discussing the various points of different machines for about half an hour the salesman said:

"Supposing you had the money and were going to town now to buy the machinery, what size would you buy?"

The farmer told him.

The salesman asked other leading questions as to specifications and extra equipment. All of

these details he entered on an order book which he had on his lap.

When they finally got to town the salesman "supposed" that the farmer would have the money from this year's crops by November, and the farmer said he would.

"Well, then," suggested the salesman, "suppose we date this order November 10th." Without further ado he handed the order book to the farmer to sign. The farmer signed.

The reason this salesman got his order was almost entirely due to the way he used his order book. If he had asked the farmer to give him the order the farmer would have in all probability balked. The request would have suggested to the farmer the possible alternative of *not* doing so. But this way the sale was made without negative suggestion.

Get the Buyer to Make a Choice

This so-called "writing out the order" close is used with great success by magazine subscription salesmen. H. A. Daum, who has been very successful in getting subscriptions for the Webb publications, has a plan which he uses that can be easily adapted to many other lines of business, particularly house to house selling.

The basis of the plan is to get together those

phases of your proposition which require the buyer to choose between two alternatives. In this case the choice of two premiums is given—a set of knives for the kitchen or a set of knives for butchering.

"Our difficulty," says Mr. Daum, "is that most of the farmers we call on already take several farm papers, many of which they do not thoroughly read, and for that reason they usually hesitate to take another. We get around this objection by short-circuiting the close, in other words we proceed as though the farmer were merely hesitating because he did not know which of the two knives he wanted. The salesman takes his order book and pencil out and says:

In Either Case the Salesman Wins

" 'Both are good sets, Mr. Brown, and it makes no difference in price which you take. Mr. Jones took the kitchen set this morning, and the last man, Mr. Olson, just across the road, took the butcher set.'

"Then while the farmer is digesting this bit of news, the salesman looks up quickly and says: 'Do you do your own butchering?'

"If the answer is 'Yes' the salesman says: 'Then you will want the butcher set,' and pointing to the butcher set, he continues: 'Then I will

make it the butcher set.' (Writes it down on order.) In nine cases out of ten the farmer will not object, and the salesman proceeds as rapidly as possible to fill in the other details, such as rural route number, post office address, etc.

"If, on the other hand, the farmer says 'No' to the salesman's question and explains that he doesn't butcher at all, the salesman's cue is to say:

" 'Then I'm going to leave that kitchen set for your wife. Most everyone chooses the kitchen set anyway. You have got to use a kitchen knife every day and you only butcher a few times a year.'

Keep Buyer's Mind Actively Employed

"As he is talking, without giving the farmer a chance to think up an objection, the salesman writes 'kitchen set' on his order blank and says: 'Let me see, you are on Rural Route No. 6, aren't you?' The question coming right on top of the act of writing 'kitchen set' on the order keeps his mind busy so that he can't think of objections."

In this plan, just as in the plan of the hardware salesman previously mentioned, the order book plays the leading part, and is indeed indispensable to making the sale. But to use these plans successfully you have to have your wits about you. Much of the success of the plan depends on being

able to keep the prospect's mind actively employed. *If this is not done the man you are selling will utilize the time to frame up an excellent reason why he won't buy today.*

Because of the opportunity given a prospect to think of reasons for refusing to sign while you are making the order out in his presence some salesmen prefer to fill it out before the interview. In this way the order is ready to sign the moment the prospect indicates that he is ready to close.

XI—Nailing Down the Order

ONE day last winter a salesman took an order from a well-known manufacturer for $18,000 worth of street car advertising. The contract was all signed and in the salesman's pocket. It had been a hard won victory and the salesman felt quite proud of himself.

As he picked up his hat preparatory to leaving the office he shook hands with the advertiser, saying: "Well, I am truly obliged to you for this—at least it is a starter—some day we hope to make a real advertiser of you."

The advertiser thought he was spending a pretty good sum and the inference that he was a piker did not "set" very well. Moreover, the speech raised the thought in the advertiser's mind that the salesman might be thinking he was spending a lot of money. He made the remark to minimize the true size of the order. At any rate, the advertiser thought he had better play safe. So he asked the salesman to let him look at the contract again, and before he had finished he cut it down to $11,000.

It is just such experiences as this that make old timers say that the first rule of salesmanship

is to get the order and get out! It cannot be disputed that the theory has merit.

On the other hand there are hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of orders cancelled every year in this country simply because the salesman who took the order *did not nail it down before* leaving the buyer.

Why Orders Don't Stay "Put"

In nearly every business there are certain peculiarities—conditions which cause misunderstandings and cancellations. In one business it is difficulty in getting uniform quality throughout the shipment, due to buying from makers over which the house has no control. In another business it is competitors' salesmen arriving on the job during the period when a buyer is unfamiliar with the new equipment. In another it is the possibility of being unable to ship on time, owing to stock depletion. In still another it is failure on the buyer's part to make full use of the thing he has purchased, and so on.

No one knows better than you do what the principal reasons are for cancellations in your line. It is your job not only to know what these reasons are, but after you have secured the order, stay with the purchaser long enough to head off possible cancellation.

For example, in selling a certain correspondence course in architectural drawing, a great many cancellations resulted when the student found a few weeks after making the first down payment that he had to lay out ten or twelve dollars for a drawing outfit. By the time the student had found this out he had lost much of the enthusiasm generated by contact with the salesman and the drawing outfit proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back.

Giving the Man More Than He Expects

By insisting that salesmen stay with the prospect after he had his order long enough to prepare him for these additional expenses this condition was largely overcome. In other words, if there are strings tied to your proposition in the shape of extras that come along after you have left the buyer to his own reflections, it is just as important that you prepare him for them as it is that you take his order.

In the same way cancellations, because of the possible inability of the house to make prompt shipment, can be materially cut down if the salesman is on the job and really finishes closing the order. Most salesmen, in their anxiety to say pleasing things to the buyer, lead the customer to expect shipment at once. This leads to disap-

pointment. Disappointment leads to anger. An angry man must blow off his steam some way, and in this case he "shows the blanky-blank concern that they can't treat him rough and get away with it."

A salesman for one of the large printing concerns, who has an enviable record for closing clean, dependable sales, makes it a point to get twice as much time as actually needed to fill an order. If it is an order that will require three days to put through the shop, he will say to the buyer: "Now I want time to turn this job out in the very best shape. I don't want to rush it through. Suppose I let you have it in five days?"

The Man Who Wants It Yesterday

The customer really doesn't need to have the job any sooner, but business men always want everything at once—and in the case of printing and engraving usually before they place the order. If the salesman asked this particular customer when he wanted it he would have said: "How soon can you let me have it?" The salesman, to make an impression, would probably reply: "I can let you have it tomorrow morning if you have to have it. So they compromise on the day after tomorrow instead.

Then when something happens so that delivery

cannot be made on the day promised the customer is disappointed. Further delay aggravates him still more. Consciously or unconsciously he gets the idea fixed in the back of his head that this salesman's house may be long on quality but it is short on service.

On the other hand if the delivery date had been set further ahead at the outset, the job could be delivered before time. The buyer had been planning on getting the printed matter on Saturday and it came on Thursday! An unheard of thing in the printing business. The customer would probably be stunned at first, but he would spend the rest of his life talking about "his" printer, who actually gets work out *before* it is promised!

Heading Off Delivery Kicks

We all poke fun at the young doctors and lawyers who stay up nights thinking up schemes to make people believe they are being rushed to death when they probably haven't a client on their books. But just the same it is human nature for us to judge business concerns according to how busy they are.

The fact that Dodge Brothers were two months behind in deliveries when other manufacturers of automobiles had hundreds of cars ahead raised the

Dodge car another notch in the estimation of possible buyers.

The suggestion that your house is standing around waiting for this particular order is not going to help you get it. On the contrary the buyer is going to wonder what is wrong that your house is not busy. So by endeavoring to set the delivery date as far ahead as possible, you are not only driving an extra nail into the order, but you are raising the prestige of the house in the eyes of the buyer.

After You Have the Order—What?

In selling made-to-order equipment a salesman will find it very profitable to write the customer occasionally while the work is in progress. Many orders are lost through the indifference of the salesman after he has the closed order. The customer can't help but feel that you were after the order, and having it, he can shift for himself. Naturally this feeling isn't going to help you when you go back later for additional equipment, or to get a testimonial letter.

The salesmen for L. A. Prouty Company, manufacturers of soda fountains, are required to write each customer at stated intervals while an order is in the shop. For example, the salesman will write that he has just been up in the shop look-

ing at the fountain and is glad to report that it has reached seventy-five per cent of completion in fifty per cent of the time promised. He might also add that the marble has been especially selected for him (it is for every customer) and give other information which will have a tendency to make the customer feel that with this salesman at least the sale does not end when the order is signed. As a result of this policy the Prouty company has sold a great many installations entirely through the efforts of the boosters it has made.

Leave More Than You Take Away

Salesmen selling a product which in turn is resold by either the dealer or jobber or both have a wonderful opportunity to do effective after-the-sale work. One of the biggest mistakes a resale salesman can make is to rush through his calls. Stay long enough with each customer to give him one or two ideas for moving the goods off his shelves.

Even though your suggestions may not be acted upon, at least they will stimulate creative thinking. You don't care whether he uses your ideas or whether he uses his own ideas so long as he keeps your line moving.

If there is anything in your order that is going to start something, let it start while you are there and not after you are gone. Slopping over "stiff" clauses in the order blank has cost salesmen dearly.

In law a sale is made when two minds meet. If the buyer can prove that you allowed him to sign the order without his understanding it, he has an excellent loop hole to wiggle out of should your company try to enforce fulfillment of the obligation.

He Prided Himself on Clean-cut Sales

E. J. Little, a veteran salesman for Bowser's tanks, says that the Bowser people used to have a very involved order form. This was necessary because Bowser at that time was using so-called "high-pressure" salesmanship and the only way the company could be sure that it really had an order was to make the order form bullet-proof.

Rather than take a chance on the customer refusing to be bound by its many "safeguarding" clauses, the salesmen used to resort to strategy, even telling the customer that it was just a formal order and there was nothing in it that required their reading carefully.

There was one man on the sales force, according to Mr. Little, however, who had the unusual repu-

tation of producing a large volume of orders with very few cancellations. This was particularly noteworthy because the salesman used very high pressure methods, and it is generally accepted that high pressure salesmanship usually results in poorly made sales. Out of a sales force of nearly five hundred this salesman stood second one year in sales volume, and first in percentage of cancellations.

The man's record attracted the attention of the executives of the company, and as cancellations were a problem, it was decided to bring the salesman in and have him tell how he did it. The salesman's explanation follows:

His Plan Was Very Simple

"After I have my man signed up I put away all my samples and printed matter except my order book. Just before I get ready to leave I say to the buyer: 'Now, I want to spend a moment with you and go over this order to make sure that everything is clear. Here is your carbon copy of the order, which I want you to keep for reference. Here is the original. Let us compare them. Here is the price, that's plain, isn't it? Here are the terms, they are as you understand them, aren't they?

" 'Now, this is a business deal. You have

bought something and we are going to ship it and you are going to pay for it. I am a salesman and I will be gone, but I have a reputation to maintain, and I am somewhat cranky about maintaining it. I never have cancellations or complaints from my customers and I never want to break that record.

" 'If there is any possibility of a misunderstanding or a cancellation in the case of this order I want it settled now, because you see by this clause that this order *cannot* be cancelled after it has been signed.

" 'Now, everything is clear. You have an exact copy of the order, which protects you, and I am taking this original order, which protects me. I will now be on my way. Thank you for the order and you may be sure I will drop in again the next time I am in town.' "

As a result of this method of nailing down the order, this salesman earned twenty percent more money in a year by the complete elimination of cancellations, allowances for cash discounts claimed, free items claimed and many other losses incidental to orders which are not thoroughly understood.

X—Legal Phases of an Order

Now that you have closed the sale, what have you? An honest to goodness order, or just a scrap of paper? Something that your treasurer can take over to the bank and borrow money on, or a mere promise to buy which meets none of the requirements of the law governing contracts?

It is little short of amazing how few salesmen have the slightest idea of the legal significance of an order. A man who has been selling goods for over thirty years, and who is supposed to be one of the best informed men in the small tool field, was asked to give what he would consider to be a legal definition of an order. He thought a long while and then said: "The promise of one man to buy certain goods from another." Another salesman in the same organization thought "an order was a record of sale." Even the sales manager of the company, who of all persons is supposed to know what the law requires a salesman to do when writing up an order, missed the mark badly. The fact was that not a single man in this whole sales force of nearly fifty people knew the correct legal definition of an order.

A commonly used definition for a sale is: "An offer to transfer the title and possession of a specified article upon certain terms, payable in money, *and the acceptance of that offer.*" It is the last part of this definition that most salesmen seem to be hazy on.

When a buyer gives you an order it is *not* a sale unless you are expressly authorized by the board of directors or the owners of the business to act as their special agent. Salesmen are seldom given that authority except in rare cases. Consequently an order must be accepted by the house before it becomes a sale.

Salesman's Authority Limited

If a salesman makes a promise that goods similar to the goods sold will not be sold to certain competitors the buyer has no redress unless confirmation is made in the acceptance of the order *by the house,* or unless it can be proved that the salesman was given authority by the house to make such an offer.

The law has frequently held that the only authority a salesman has, unless expressly given by his house, is the authority to do what is necessary to the performance of his duties. For example, a salesman might have authority to hire a taxi and the taxi owner would be justified in looking

to his employer for payment because when the salesman was sent to call on a prospect that could not be reached by walking, authority to secure adequate transportation was indirectly conveyed. Ordinarily a salesman has no authority to sell samples, collect money, or in any other way usurp the functions of an authorized agent.

To hold good in law the offer or proposal must be definite and complete.

Goods sent on approval, or subject to return if not satisfactory are not sold. The buyer merely has an option on them. An order for something to be made to specifications which will be furnished "later" is not a sale.

False Statements Break Contract

When the buyer agrees to buy, but the seller did not agree to sell, it is a one-sided contract and not enforcible in law. When a customer orders from a catalogue or other sales literature it is not a sale unless the advertiser states in his catalogue that goods will be sent upon receipt of order.

When a salesman states in a letter that if a customer will put a given amount of money in an envelope and send it to a certain address, the salesman assumes responsibility for the delivery of the merchandise.

When a buyer has been induced to order goods

by false statements of a salesman, or even statements that are only misleading, the contract can be rescinded. But to make a statement fraudulent in the eyes of the law it must relate to past or present fact; it cannot involve the mere prediction or opinion.

In term orders, such as an advertising contract calling for a total amount of space to be used at stated periods, or a year's supply of merchandise to be delivered and paid for in part each month, it is important that the total amount of the order be stated.

Salesmen in a perfectly excusable desire to make the hurdle as low as possible often write up the order on the basis of so much a month or whatever the period of payment may be. In the case of a publisher's salesman who sold an annual contract for advertising at the twelve-page rate, and failed to insert in the order the total amount of space to be used, the publisher could not force fulfillment. The customer claimed title to the twelve-time rate on a single page, and could not be held to the single-page rate which was supposed to apply when less than twelve pages were used. Neither could he be compelled to use the full amount of space on which the rate was based.

XI—When an Order Is Not an Order

THE position of manager of an important branch of a big steel tubing concern recently became open. The sales manager nominated for the position a salesman who had been turning in a nice lot of business from a "back-breaking" territory.

The nomination came up at the next meeting of the executive committee, composed of the president, vice-president, treasurer and sales manager. The sales manager told briefly why he thought this particular salesman should be put in charge of the branch. Ordinarily the sales manager's nominations went through without debate, but this time the treasurer objected:

"I agree with our sales manager that from the standpoint of being able to close business, Jones is the logical man, but from what I have seen of Jones' work he is very careless and undependable in handling detail matters. There is hardly an order he takes which does not have to go back to him or we have to write his customer. In several cases we have run into bad jams simply because of his careless way of making out orders. I think the Pittsburgh office is too important to trust to

a man who is not a good executive as well as a good salesman."

The sales manager argued that it wasn't fair to expect a salesman to be a bookkeeper. He pointed out that as a rule good salesmen were notoriously poor detail men. But the treasurer won his point. The conference decided that a salesman who was careless in making out orders would be careless in more important matters and consequently lacking in the executive ability which the position called for. Another salesman whose sales record was far below that of the man nominated by the sales manager, but who always turned in clean, carefully made out orders, got the big job.

A Salesman Is Judged by His Orders

Perhaps these men made a mistake in passing up the producer simply because he was careless in making out his orders. It is easy to say: "What salesman is there who doesn't make such mistakes?" Like the sales manager at the conference, we excuse these failings in ourselves on the ground that we are hired to sell goods and not to clerk.

But when it comes to filling the positions higher up, you will find that they invariably go to the salesman who gives care and thought to the details that are just as much his job as selling. You

are being judged by the way you write up orders and look after the details of your work almost as much as you are being judged by the business you send in.

Many illustrations could be cited, if space permitted, which would show what large proportions seemingly little mistakes in writing up orders can assume. In justice to the salesmen it is only fair to say that these mistakes are often not so much carelessness as they are laxness on the part of the house in not insisting that the orders be accurately made out.

Don't Take Things for Granted

For example, you might not think it absolutely necessary if you were a sugar salesman to go to the trouble of writing out "20 cents per pound basis" every time you took an order. You might think that the words "20 cent basis" would do just as well so far as the house was concerned. Yet the Franklin Sugar Refining Company stands to lose several hundred thousand dollars due to the carelessness of somebody in accepting orders from the sales force which did not specify "per pound." This company is engaged in a number of legal battles throughout Pennsylvania with wholesale grocers which it is likely to lose because the contract is *indefinite.*

We cannot be too painstaking in writing up an order. It is the ounce of prevention for many, many pounds of trouble. One little careless mistake may mean the loss of a good customer, it means a black mark on your good record, it means the direct loss of money and time, and it might mean a lawsuit and a good booster turned into a bitter enemy.

You have been told this many times before, I know, but these are facts which cannot be too often brought to your attention. Even though you are poor at detail, you can improve by applying yourself to the task.

Mistakes that We All Can Make

In order to emphasize the seriousness of slip-slop order making, a number of sales managers were asked to enumerate mistakes their salesmen commonly made in writing up orders. While the mistakes will not all apply to your work, you will be interested, I am sure, to learn their nature:

Failure to Give Address: A thread manufacturer complains of salesmen who have a habit of sending in several orders from the same town without the name of town written on order. Evidently the men think because the sales manager knows the town they are working, that every-

body else in the office does. Fill out all the details of the address carefully. If you don't someone will have to spend a lot of time looking it up; it may even mean that the order will go to a customer of the same name in *another* town. In any event it means delay and added expense.

Incorrectly Spelled Buyer's Name: Make it a rule to always PRINT the buyer's name on new orders. Copy the name from a letterhead or window sign. Never guess that he spells it "Kohn" when it might be spelled "Cohan." Such mistakes get into the mailing lists and office records and are hard to erase. The buyer resents having his name mutilated and holds it against the salesman.

Why Orders Go Wrong

Incorrectly Spelled Town Name: On one occasion a salesman covering West Virginia sold a bill of goods to a customer in Charles*town*. He wrote the order up "Charles*ton*." A carload of merchandise was sent to the wrong destination. In the meantime the customer in Charles*town* became peeved at the poor service and placed the order with a competitive house.

Failure to Designate State: It seems almost foolish to caution salesmen to be careful to always indicate the state on the order. Yet a recent analysis of orders in a large wholesale house

showed that nearly twenty percent of the orders came through without states given.

In the case of towns bearing the name of some well known city located in different states it is well to heavily underscore the state. For example, the postmaster at Chicago, Kentucky, said that nearly one-third of the mail received was originally sent to Chicago, Illinois, by mistake.

In a number of cases there are as high as twenty and thirty states having a town by the same name. Take for instance *Washington*: there are no less than twenty-eight states having a town by that name. There are twenty-five states with a *Cleveland,* and twenty-four with a *Springfield.*

The State Is Important

The following list showing the number of cities in different states bearing the same name will serve to illustrate how easy it is for orders to be shipped to the wrong destination when state is omitted:

Akron, Ind.	Beloit, Wisconsin
Akron, Ohio	Birmingham, Ala.
Albany, Ill.	Birmingham, Iowa
Albany, N. Y.	Dallas, Tex.
Bangor, Maine	Dallas, W. Va.
Bangor, Mich.	Madison, Ill.
Beloit, Iowa	Madison, Wis.

Nashville, Ark.	Philadelphia, Pa.
Nashville, Tenn.	St. Paul, Minn.
Philadelphia, Ill.	St. Paul, Neb.

Abbreviating State Names: While we are on the subject of state names, get the habit of spelling them out. Much confusion is caused in shipping rooms because of the similarity of abbreviations. Maryland and Indiana, Missouri and Maine, New York and New Jersey are good illustrations of this.

A Good Way to Lose a Customer

Routing Carload Shipments: Too often salesmen in their hurry to get through and be on their way scribble "best way" on the order blank opposite the space for car routing. They figure that there is a traffic man at the office whose job it is to look after the routing, so why should they worry about it?

Here is one reason why: A large brick company received an order from one of their salesmen for a carload of brick to be sent to a lumber yard in a small town having two railroad connections. One of the roads had a switching track on the customer's yard and the other was a mile away, without any connection.

The brick company's traffic man, of course, did not know that. So he routed the shipment over

what he thought to be "best way." He picked the wrong road. As a result the brick company received a bill for $40 covering the cost of hauling the brick by wagon. This would have been avoided had the salesman taken time to fill out the order properly.

What an Extra Cipher Can Do: In writing up orders for merchandise be careful not to add extra zeros to your digit. Another foolish remark, you think? Well, not so very long ago a salesman for a pencil concern sent in an order from a jobber for 9,000 gross of carpenter keel.

A Costly Mistake

"This order," says the vice-president, "was by far the largest we had ever received, but the price was particularly attractive at that time and we naturally surmised that the jobber was speculating on the market. The goods went out in January, the invoice was discounted in ten days' time. At the end of the year the customer took his annual inventory and discovered he had over 8,000 gross on hand! The head of the firm severely censored us for shipping any such quantity, as he had intended to order only 900 gross."

Listing Items Sold by Dozens and Gross: In writing up long orders, often under extremely unfavorable conditions, salesmen frequently involve

the house in a controversy by using ditto marks all the way down.

A drug salesman recently wrote up an order containing seven items. Six of these items called for a given number of dozens, but the third item was for 40 gross. In his haste the salesman forgot to change back to dozens after entering the 40 gross item. As a result the order was shipped with the last three items dittoed "gross" instead of "dozen" as the salesman had intended.

The same mistake frequently is made in writing orders for one or two pieces "1" or "2" instead of "1-12 doz." or "2-12 doz.," as the case may be. You can't be too careful in writing amounts. By far the most grief arises through mistakes of this kind. The customer thinks the salesman is trying to "slip" one over on him, and many friendships of long standing have thus been broken.

Write It Into the Order

"Side" Agreements: Another source of strained relations between customer and salesman arises out of "understandings" that a salesman makes with a customer, but which are not written into the order.

At the time you feel tempted to make these agreements you are perfectly sincere, and fully expect to fulfill the agreement. But only too often

something happens that you cannot foresee at the time. Perhaps you are promoted to a new position, or given a change of territory, or you may take sick and die. Then what happens? The customer naturally looks to the house to make good on your bargain, and the house, not being bound by your personal agreements, does not feel obligated to fulfill your obligation. Result: the customer gets sore, thinks you are a crook and spends the rest of his life going around knocking you and the house in that territory.

Unintentional Order Stuffing

Optional Clauses in Contract: In most printed contracts there are usually clauses of an optional character. The salesman is supposed to cross out all but one of these. A salesman for an adding machine company failed to cross out the clauses "2% ten days," "30 days net," so as to leave the remaining clause which reads "20% cash with order, balance in four months." Later legal complications developed over the order and the company found itself in the unpleasant position of having an order that wasn't an order because the contract did not specifically call for *definite* payment under *definite* conditions!

Check Marks that Run Wild: Nearly every careful salesman checks back with the customer

the items on an order. This is an excellent practice, but be careful that the check marks do not run into the figures. It is a good plan to use what bookkeepers call a "tick" in place of the conventional check.

A well known oil company has a salesman who has the habit of checking in front of the amount column. Just recently he allowed a check mark to run over the figure one which made it look like the figure four. The shipping clerk filled the order for four cases of package grease. The customer was sure that the salesman had stuffed his order and was very aggravated. It cost the company over $100 to make good this careless mistake.

Customers Are Naturally Suspicious

Changes in Original Order but Not the Customer's Copy: A hardware salesman took a quantity order and neglected to show the additional discount on the customer's copy, although he noted it on the original which went to the house.

After the salesman left the customer noticed that the extra discount had not been deducted and he jumped to the conclusion, as customers do, that the salesman was trying to put something over. Immediately he wired cancellation of the order. The salesman had to double back to get the order

reinstated, and even to this day the customer has no use for the salesman.

Making Irregular Terms and Prices: Ninety-nine out of every hundred orders turned in by salesmen are clean cut, definite contracts. But occasionally a temptation arises to make a special concession of some kind to a good customer. This may take the form of a special price, something thrown in, or an extended billing. At the time you feel that the special circumstances warrant such action, and it seems to you that it will tend to make the customer feel more kindly toward the house. So you slip it into the order—perhaps you are secretly hopeful that in the rush it will get by unnoticed.

Men Don't Buy Discounts

This is a dangerous practice. It nearly always results in trouble. In the first place, no matter how much you think the customer is entitled to special consideration, it would be the height of poor business for your house to extend a favor to one customer that it would not be willing to extend to all. It would be wrong for your house to cut prices. In fact, you would be the first to object if it were to adopt the policy of different prices for different buyers.

In the second place, your action would have the

damaging effect of shaking the confidence which the customer has in you and your house. He would begin to wonder if in spite of all you have told him your house really is a one-price house. He wonders if he had held out longer for lower prices at other times whether he could not have hammered down your price. And forever after you may be sure that you are going to have your hands full convincing the buyer that the price you quoted him is really and truly your best price. Better not take the man's order at all if you can't take it clean. If you make the man really want what you are selling, he isn't going to turn you down because you stand "pat" on the price marked on the ticket.

What One Salesman Has Learned

Orders Signed by Firm Name Only: A salesman for one of the publishing houses permitted a buyer to sign an order with the firm name only, neglecting to affix his own name as agent. Later the order got into the courts and the publisher lost the case through the buyer denying that he had signed it and setting up the defense that the salesman himself had signed the order.

Not only does the accuracy shown by a salesman in writing up his orders help him to win favor at the office, but what is quite as important,

it makes a good impression on the buyer. Wm. C. Rice, a man who has trained hundreds of salesmen for one of the big office appliance concerns, says: "I have found that buyers form an opinion both of the concern and the salesman from the manner in which the orders are written up. It is only natural that when a salesman hands you a copy of a poorly drawn and carelessly written order he forms an opinion that a house which will tolerate such order writing, will be careless and inaccurate in other matters as well. We all know that first impressions are lasting. Therefore, I contend that a salesman should be just as careful in writing up orders as he is in the arrangement of his samples or his personal appearance."

Sloppy Order Writing Cost an Order

S. Roland Hall, a well known writer on business subjects, recently told me that nothing aggravated him more than a life insurance salesman who, in filling out his application, does not think it essential that every question should be accurately answered.

On one occasion Mr. Hall told a salesman that if he did not care to fill out the application blank accurately he did not care to take out the policy. The salesman had suggested the omission of some

disease which he did not regard as important. Mr. Hall, having as a youth been a court reporter, knew how an inaccurate statement signed by the owner of a policy would act against the claimants if there happened to be any trouble about collecting the insurance.

It costs no more to be accurate and painstaking than it does to be careless and indifferent, yet it makes all the difference in the world when it comes to your ultimate success. It is hard for some of us to spend time on what we think to be matters of small consequence, but it pays and pays handsomely.

So let's make a rule with ourselves to do whatever we do as nearly right as we can. There is a good deal, after all, in that old saying that if you mind the little things the big things will mind themselves.

SUPPLEMENT

Plans for Overcoming a Buyer's Desire to Defer Ordering

The Real Salesman

One who has a steady eye, a steady nerve, a steady tongue and steady habits.

One who understands men and can make himself understood by men.

One who turns up with a smile and still smiles if he is turned down.

One who strives to out-think the buyer rather than to out-talk him.

One who is silent when he has nothing to say and also when the buyer has something to say.

One who takes a firm interest in his firm's interest.

One who knows that he is looking out for his own interests by looking out for his customer's interests.

One who keeps his word, his temper and his friends.

One who wins respect by being respectable and respectful. —*The Salt Seller.*

Arguments for Overcoming Desire to Defer Buying

THE following suggestions have been taken very largely from the specialty field, as it is in this field that the science of closing has attained its highest state of development. The underlying principles, however, apply equally well to selling established trade. Any salesman selling a line of products will substantially increase his business if he will select from his line one product and sell it at the outset in the same way that cash registers or insurance are sold. Closing a sale on an item thus selected not only will give you a larger order than otherwise, but it gives you a decided advantage in further negotiations.

* * *

When the Buyer Wants to "Look Around Some More"

BUYER: "I admit that your line looks mighty good, and it is quite likely I will give you an order some day, but before doing so I want to look around a bit."

SELLER: "Are you a married man?"

BUYER: "Yes, why do you ask?"

SELLER: "I was just wondering if you waited until you had seen all the women in America before you married your wife, or when you met the one that suited you whether you didn't settle the question then and there."

BUYER: "Oh, I looked them over, don't fear."

SELLER: "Yes, but I'll bet ten dollars that when you did meet the missus and decided she was just about what you were looking for that you didn't ask her to wait until September to give you a chance to look over some more girls."

* * *

For the Buyer Who is Afraid to Decide

BUYER: "Right now I am not buying anything that isn't absolutely necessary. This proposition of yours, I will admit, is something I ought to have, but I can get along without it for a while."

SELLER: "Let me put it to a business man's vote. You vote 'No.' We have sold nearly 4,000 concerns in your line of business during the last six months. Each of these sales is a vote 'Yes.' Doesn't that majority convince you that it is a necessity?"

"I Can't Decide Now—I Will Call You Up"

BUYER: "I will have to think this proposition over, and I haven't time to go into it further right now. Leave me your card and I will telephone you when I am ready."

SELLER: "You can hardly ever get me at the office. In order to save your time and mine, I will fill out the order and you can sign it. I won't turn it in until tomorrow noon. I will call you up at that time. If you have decided not to go ahead I will tear up the order."

(*The strategy here is to keep control of the action. If you leave the next step to the prospect he will usually omit the step.*)

* * *

The Man Who Thinks He is Hard Up

BUYER: "I am going to take your proposition up, but right now I am short of ready cash. Come back and see me the first of next month."

SELLER: "When I first met you, you told me that you had started this business with $500 and now have $1,500 invested in it. From that I would judge you are putting your money back into the business, and only drawing out enough to meet necessary expenses."

BUYER: "Yes, that is true."

SELLER: "Then it isn't likely that you will have any more ready money in a month than you have right now, is it?"

* * *

"Best Sales Talk I Ever Heard"

BUYER: "I will have to admit you are some salesman. I have had a dozen salesmen in here trying to sell me the same thing that you are selling, but you have them all backed off the boards. You have absolutely sold me. When I get ready to order, I'll let you know."

SELLER: "I appreciate the compliment, but I am not trying to sell you anything. I am only helping you to decide to buy something that will make you a lot of money. However, your promise to me won't make any profits for you, the profits won't start until you actually sign the order. If you really believe what I have told you about the money-making possibilities of this article you want this just as soon as you can get it. If you don't believe what I told you then I am not much of a salesman."

(This type of buyer has been the Waterloo of many a good salesman. Flattery is harder to combat than the cold-blooded turn down. Only truly big men are immune from it.)

* * *

"Wait Until Business Picks Up"

BUYER: "We had a storm here that damaged the crops

and we are going to have poor business this year."

SELLER: "Do you believe that your sales will be less this year?"

BUYER: "Yes, much less."

SELLER: "Then your profit will be smaller also, won't it?"

BUYER: "Yes, I guess it will."

SELLER: "That makes your net profit smaller also, then, doesn't it?"

BUYER: "Yes, that is right, too."

SELLER: "In that event you need something like this which will conserve (or increase) your profits, otherwise you may have no profits at all at the end of the year."

* * *

"I Will Submit Your Proposition to Our Directors"

BUYER: "Your equipment is just what we need and we are going to buy it. But it involves quite a large outlay of money, and I feel that I ought to put it up to our directors before giving you a definite answer. The next meeting of the directors will be on the fifteenth of next month. Drop in the following day and I will give you an order."

SELLER: "Of course, if you haven't the authority to spend $250?"

BUYER: "It is not a question of authority. I can spend $25,000 so far as that is concerned."

SELLER: "I don't doubt it. I was just thinking of a somewhat similar case that I know about. A machinery salesman had proven to a department manager of the National Cash Register Company that he had a device that would save the company $10 a day. The department manager had authority to buy, but would not do so, saying that he would take the matter before the directors at their next meeting.

"At the meeting President Patterson asked the department manager how much this device would save. He replied $10 a day. Mr. Patterson then asked: 'How long have you known about this?' The official said: 'One week.' Mr. Patterson then took seven ten dollar bills from his bill fold and threw them across the room, saying: 'Let this be a lesson to you. By delaying to buy that device you threw away $70 of this company's money the same as I have done here.' "

* * *

The Second-Hand "Stall"

BUYER: "Before I give you an order I want to look around and see if I can't pick up something second hand."

SELLER: "When you buy a railroad ticket, Mr. Prospect, you pay for the distance you wish to travel. You can't get to San Francisco by buying a ticket to St. Louis. My proposition is the same."

or this

BUYER: "I want to look around and find something cheaper, perhaps I can buy something second hand."

SELLER: "Suppose that you were in the garden truck business, and had a large field planted with cabbages.

"Suppose you were losing money through the fact that pigs, sheep and cows ate the cabbage.

"Suppose you went to a carpenter and asked him how much he would charge you to build a fence around your cabbage patch.

"If he told you he would build a fence three feet high for $600, you would naturally ask if it would keep out the cows, pigs and sheep.

"If he told you that it would keep out the pigs but not the sheep and cows you would be foolish to pay $600 for it.

"If he said he would build you a four-foot-high fence for $800 that would keep out the pigs and sheep, but not the cows, it would still be folly to pay $800 just for the sake of giving the cows all the cabbage.

"But if he were to tell you that for $1,000 he would build you a fence five feet high that would keep out the pigs, the sheep and the cows, then you would give him the order, because that is what you would want.

"Now, when you buy this equipment there are certain things you want to do," etc.

"I Want to Talk It Over With a Friend"

BUYER: "You have completely sold me, but before going any further I want to ask a friend of mine who has one in use what he thinks of it. Suppose you drop back next week."

SELLER: "Why not get your friend on the telephone right now and let's get this matter settled today. We are both busy."

BUYER: "My friend is out of town (or in another city, etc.)"

SELLER: "After all, Mr. Buyer, is it fair to yourself to accept the verdict of one man as proof either of the merit or demerit of the proposition? You know yourself that many a father has given his son a splendid education and every advantage a son could have, but the son does not take advantage of the education. Yet there is no one who will say that education is not a good thing. The same is true with my proposition. Even if your friend said what I have to offer is absolutely worthless, there are hundreds of satisfied users, as you will see from the list, who *know* that it is a good thing."

* * *

When the Wife Wears the Pants

BUYER: "Before ordering, I want to talk it over with my wife."

SELLER: "Mr. Buyer, it is not fair to your wife to put such a decision up to her. If you wish her honest opinion you should bring her here and let me explain this proposition to her, just as I have explained it to you. It has taken me years to learn all about this line, and naturally I can't explain everything to you in thirty-five minutes.

There will be a lot of questions she will want to ask that you may not be able to answer. Could you call her up and arrange a meeting now?"

BUYER: "She is out shopping. She isn't home."

SELLER: "Well, then, why not decide yourself? After all, your wife leans on your judgment in matters of this kind. If you had money in a bank, and you heard that the bank was likely to fail, you wouldn't go to your wife and ask her if you could change your account to another bank. She would think you were a fine kind of business man if you didn't act on your own decision. This is the same kind of a business proposition. If you do it you make money, if you don't do it you lose money. There can be no question about what to do. Surely you are not afraid to back up your own business judgment."

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